

Message Text

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ORIGIN OPIC-06

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DRAFTED BY OPIC/GD:RSTERN

APPROVED BY EB/IFD/OIA:RJSMITH

OPIC/GC:CHUNT

EB/IFD/OIA:DSTEBBING

ARA/CAR:DCNORTON

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY KINGSTON IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 194086

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EINV, JM

SUBJECT: REVERE

1. MOLOWA OF REVERE INFORMED OPIC AUGUST 13 THAT NEGOTIATIONS WITH LABOR REPRESENTATIVE SHEARER AUGUST 3-4 DID NOT REPEAT NOT ACHIEVE AGREEMENT TO EXTENSION OF PRESENT LABOR CONTRACT BEYOND SEPTEMBER 30 EXPIRATION TO YEAR END. MOLOWA SAID THAT SHEARER HAD NOT REJECTED PROPOSAL OUTRIGHT BUT HAD INDICATED THAT IT MIGHT NOT BE ACCEPTABLE TO MEMBERSHIP AND THAT OTHER EVENTS (UNSPECIFIED) COULD UPSET ANY SUCH AGREEMENT. MOLOWA DID NOT PARTICIPATE IN THESE TALKS, WHICH WERE HANDLED BY REVERE'S JAMAICA MANAGER NEIL O'DONNELL AN INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS OFFICIAL FROM NEW YORK, AND HIS REPORTING WAS UNCLEAR IN SEVERAL RESPECTS. OPIC HAS REQUESTED FURTHER REPORT FROM NEW YORK.

2. REVERE REPORTED RESULTS OF SHEARER MEETING TO GOJ AND THERE HAVE SINCE BEEN TWO TELEPHONE CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN REVERE PRESIDENT COLLINS AND ACTING PM COORE. COORE PRO-
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MISED FURTHER GOJ RESPONSE ON POSSIBLE BUYOUT ARRANGEMENTS

(PARTICULARLY RE ALUMINA PRICING) VIA LETTER AND TOLD REVERE TO CONTACT MEYER MATALON. MOLOWA SAID MATALON IS AVOIDING THEM" AND NO LETTER RECEIVED.

3. MOLOWA INFORMED OPIC AUGUST 14 THAT, AS A RESULT, REVERE TELEXED DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER COORE AUGUST 14 ADVISING HIM THAT PLANT WILL BE CLOSED DOWN SOON AND THAT WORKERS WILL BE INFORMED AUGUST 15. MOLOWA ANTICIPATES THAT NEWS WILL HIT KINGSTON PRESS MONDAY AUGUST 18. MATALON CONTACTED REVERE BY PHONE AFTER RECEIPT OF TELEX TO SAY THERE WAS NOTHING NEW TO REPORT FROM GOJ.

4. ALL THIS IS A FRUSTRATING REGRESSION IN THE STATE OF AFFAIRS FOLLOWING EARLIER INDICATION GOJ WILLINGNESS TO MAKE SIGNIFICANT CONCESSION IN REMISSION OF PRODUCTION LEVY. WE ARE UNCERTAIN AS TO (1) WHETHER REVERE PURSUED THE WAGE FREEZE MATTER AS VIGOROUSLY AS POSSIBLE; (2) WHETHER SHEARER SIMPLY MANEUVERING TO PUT ONUS OF WAGE FREEZE ON GOJ; AND (3) WHETHER PRESSURES CREATED BY ANY PUBLICITY CONCERNING ANTICIPATED SHUTDOWN WOULD INDUCE GOJ AND WORKERS TO REACH ACCOMODATION WITH REVERE OR HAVE REVERSE EFFECT.

5. REQUEST ASAP EMBASSY'S ASSESSMENT OF SITUATION, DRAWING ON SUITABLE CONTACTS, AND ADVICE AS TO USEFUL STEPS USG COULD TAKE TO ALLEVIATE MATTER. WE NEED PERSPECTIVES ON THESE DEVELOPMENTS OTHER THAN THAT OF REVERE. KISSINGER

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